



Reading Toolkit: Grade 7 Objective 3.A.2.a

Student Handout: Reading: Grade 7 Objective 3.A.2.a

Standard 3.0 Comprehension of Literary Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Literary Text

Indicator 2. Analyze text features to facilitate understanding of literary texts

Objective a. Analyze text features that contribute to meaning

Assessment Limits:

In the text or a portion of the text

Selected Response (SR) Item

Question

Read this passage about a family's dinner table conversation from the novel [Absolutely Normal Chaos](#). In paragraphs 2 and 3 words are placed in parentheses. The *most probable* reason the words are in parentheses is that the author is—

- A. showing sympathy for Dad
- B. amused by the conversation
- C. showing the narrator is at the table
- D. helping the reader follow the conversation

Correct Answer

D. helping the reader follow the conversation

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Handouts

from Absolutely Normal Chaos

by Sharon Creech

Well, I have to admit that we did get an *interesting* bit of news today! I almost missed it entirely, because of all the commotion at the dinner table. There is always commotion at the dinner table—you can hardly hear yourself eat. We had spaghetti, and Dougie doesn't like spaghetti and was pushing it around his plate and slopping sauce all over, and so Dennis punched him and Dougie started crying and Mom told him to be quiet and eat his spaghetti because he wasn't getting anything else. And Dougie said, "I'm just a poor little slob," and Dennis said, "That's right."

In the middle of all that Dad said, "Had a letter from Radene today." Radene is married to Dad's brother, Uncle Carl Joe, and they live in West Virginia. "Did you see it?" Dad said. (He meant the letter.)

"No, I didn't see it. Dougie, if you don't stop that hollering right this minute—" (Just to give you an idea of how hard it is to follow the conversation.)

"Well, she wants to know—"

"Dennis, are you aggravating the situation? If you are—" Mom can hardly eat, she's so busy trying to figure out who's causing the trouble. All this time Tommy is throwing spaghetti all over the floor and it's in his hair, but that's just the way he eats.

"Sally, are you listening or not?" My dad is getting annoyed because he can't stand all this commotion, and it happens every night.

"Why, of course I'm listening, Sam. Dennis, put your hands on the table where I can see them."

"Radene wants to send Carl Ray up here." Dad eats a meatball.

About this time Dougie is so upset that he spills his milk right onto my plate.

"Sam, can't you *do* something about them?" Mom said.

My dad looked up from his meatballs and spaghetti and said, "Somehow, I don't think that any of my study of rock formations and fossils prepared me for this."

I don't know how we all settled down, but we did for a time, and that's when Mom finally realized what Dad had said about ten minutes earlier.

"Radene said *what?*"

"She wants to send Carl Ray up here."

Carl Ray is one of Aunt Radene's and Uncle Carl Joe's seven children. He's my cousin.

"What do you mean, she wants to send Carl Ray up here?" My mom didn't look too happy about this.

"Just temporarily," my dad said. "He wants to get a job. No work down there. It'll just be for a little while, until he gets a job and gets on his feet."

"Send him *here*? To *this* house? To live with *us*? As I said, my mom didn't seem too happy about all this.

Then she said, "Don't you think that's a little strange, Sam? There are lots of other places he could go, aren't there?"

My father shrugged. Sometimes he doesn't like to elaborate.

"And just where exactly will we put him?" My mother had stopped eating by now.

"Well, we could put the boys in together—"

"All three of them?"

"Wouldn't hurt 'em. Then we could put Carl Ray in the little room where Tommy is now."

"In the *nursery*? Sam, are you *serious*?"

"It's just temporary. A month. Maybe two months. Maybe the summer—"

"The *summer*? Are you serious? My father was closely examining his meatball. My mom kept going. "And *when* does she want Carl Ray to come up here."

My father was chewing when he answered. "Saturday."

Mom almost choked. "*Saturday? Saturday?* Sam, today is *Thursday*! You can't be serious. Why didn't she phone?"